



OFFICE OF THE COUNTY EXECUTIVE

ROCKVILLE, MARYLAND 20850

Douglas M. Duncan
County Executive

June 29, 2005

The Honorable Robert L. Ehrlich, Jr.
Governor of the State of Maryland
State House, 100 State Circle
Annapolis, MD 21401

Dear Governor Ehrlich:

I urge Maryland to become a full participating member in The Regional Greenhouse Gas Initiative (RGGI). As someone who cares deeply about the type of environmental legacy we are leaving for our children and grandchildren, I was dismayed to learn that Maryland is not a full participant in RGGI, a cooperative effort by Northeastern and Mid-Atlantic states to reduce carbon dioxide emissions – a greenhouse gas that causes global warming. The National Academy of Sciences reports that the Earth's surface temperature has risen by one degree Fahrenheit in the past century. If unchecked, serious climate change could occur, resulting in rising sea levels and changes in precipitation that could significantly affect human health and our food supply.

The Washington region suffers from some of the worst air pollution in the nation – and the failure to address this situation is impacting public health, our economy and the vitality of the Chesapeake Bay. To combat the problems caused by greenhouse gas emissions, five years ago Montgomery County became a participating member in The Cities for Climate Protection Program (CCP), a worldwide network of over 350 cities and counties that have pledged to reduce emissions. Montgomery County has pledged, as part of this effort, to develop a plan to substantially reduce greenhouse gas levels by the year 2010.

For years, Montgomery County has done its part to reduce air pollution through our innovative Air Quality Protection strategy, including Montgomery County's purchase of five percent of our energy from wind -- the largest municipal purchase of wind energy in the country; establishment of the first "Code Red/Ride Free" policy in the region, offering free bus trips during the worst ozone days and challenging others to follow suit; my endorsement of the "Four Pollutant Bill" legislation as a way for Maryland to reduce emissions from coal-fired power plants and improve air quality and public health and endorsement of the Maryland Clean Cars Act, which would establish tougher emissions standards and could cut our toxic air emissions by nearly a quarter; the purchase of more than 150 alternative fuel buses, vans and trucks; and the fact that one-third of the County's bus fleet runs on compressed natural gas.

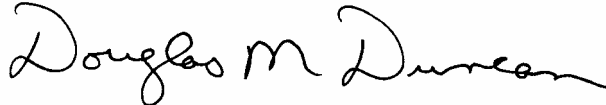


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If a local jurisdiction can find ways to aggressively improve our air quality and mitigate emissions at a local level, just think of the impact that all of Maryland could have, especially when working with other states along the eastern seaboard.

Protecting our environment is far too important to our future for Maryland to be sitting on the sidelines. I urge you to reconsider Maryland's position and join RGGI as they develop a regional strategy for controlling greenhouse gas emissions. None of us will ever regret the steps we take today to mitigate the haunting prospects of global climate change or make the air we breathe safer for future generations.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Douglas M. Duncan". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style with a large initial "D" and a long, sweeping underline.

Douglas M. Duncan
County Executive